

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

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EXDIS

INFO ADDRESSEES: EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADORS/CHARGES

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, IR, AF

SUBJECT: BHUTTO'S MEETING WITH THE SHAH, OCTOBER 1-2

1. AGHA SHAHI ASKED THAT I SEE HIM THIS MORNING TO TELL ME OF ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HAD BEEN MADE A FEW HOURS EARLIER ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH BANGLADESH AND TO INFORM ME GENERALLY OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE TALKS BETWEEN BHUTTO AND THE SHAH IN TEHRAN. I CONGRATULATED HIM ON THE FORMER ANNOUNCEMENT. OUR COMMENTS THEREON WILL BE SENT SEPARATELY.

2. AGHA SHAHI SAID THAT THE TALKS BETWEEN BHUTTO AND THE SHAH WERE FOR THE MOST PART PRIVATE WITH NO ONE ELSE PRESENT. HE SAID BHUTTO HAD BRIEFED HIM ON THE AIRPLANE COMING BACK AND ASKED THAT HE GIVE ME THE SUBSTANCE OF WHAT HAPPENED WITHOUT DELAY. I GATHER THAT THE INITIATIVE FOR THE MEETING CAME FROM BHUTTO AND THAT THE TIMING WAS INFLUENCED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, BE HIS DESIRE TO INFORM THE SHAH IN ADVANCE OF THE PENDING NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH BANGLADESH.

3. SHAHI SAID THE TALKS WERE QUITE WIDE-RANGING. ON

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THE FIRST DAY, THEY DISCUSSED THE SITUATION IN DETAIL

IN THE REGION WITH EMPHASIS ON INDIA, AFGHANISTAN, AND BANGLADESH. BHUTTO HAD TOLD THE SHAH OF HIS CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO THE SIMLA PROCESS WITH INDIA AND OF THE NEW RELATIONSHIP HE HOPED TO ESTABLISH WITHOUT DELAY WITH BANGLADESH, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE A QUICK EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS, MOVEMENT ON TRADE, DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS, ETC. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT CONSIDERABLE TIME WAS DEVOTED TO THE SUBJECT OF AFGHANISTAN, WITH BHUTTO EAGER TO OBTAIN THE IMPRESSION OF THE SHAH AS TO WHAT THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN REALLY WAS, AND TO ENLIST HIS EFFORTS IN VIEW OF INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF IRAN-AFGHAN RELATIONS, TO HELP KEEP THINGS UNDER CONTROL. ON HIS PART, BHUTTO TALKED ABOUT THE COMING SUPREME COURT DECISION ON THE LEGALITY OF THE GOP'S FEBRUARY BANNING OF THE NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY (NAP). HE APPARENTLY SAID THAT THERE WAS SOME THINKING THAT A DECISION AGAINST THE NAP WOULD APPEAR TO CLOSE THE DOOR ON ANY POSSIBLE NEGOTIATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN, OR THE IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE COURTS IN PAKISTAN UNDER ITS PARLIMENTARY DEMOCRACY WERE INDEPENDENT AND THAT WHATEVER DECISION THEY MADE WOULD NOT BE A CONTRIVED ONE (HE TOLD ME LAST SATURDAY NIGHT AT DINNER THAT HE THOUGHT REPEAT THOUGHT THE DECISION WOULD BE AGAINST THE NAP). BHUTTO SAID HE WANTED HIS IMPORTANT NEIGHBORS AND WESTERN COUNTRIES TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE COURT'S DECISION WOULD BE STRICTLY ITS OWN. HE SAID ITS VERDICT WOULD OF COURSE BE A LEGAL ONE, AND THAT SO FAR AS HE WAS CONCERNED, THIS WOULD NOT AFFECT CONTINUING EFFORTS ON THE POLITICAL LEVEL TO TRY TO GET ALONG WITH AFGHANISTAN.

4. THE MEETING ON THE SECOND DAY DEALT MAINLY WITH THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE REGION. BHUTTO APPARENTLY TOLD THE SHAH THAT HE FOUND IT PERSONALLY EMBARRASSING TO HAVE TO ASK THE SHAH FOR ASSISTANCE BUT IT SEEMED TO HIM THAT THE DESTINIES OF THEIR TWO COUNTRIES WERE SO TIED TOGETHER THAT HE HAD NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE. HE TOLD THE SHAH THAT HE COULD REALLY ONLY TURN TO IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA FOR ANY SUBSTANTIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE SECURITY FIELD.

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5. THE SHAH APPARENTLY SAID "I HAVE DECIDED TO HELP YOU." HE ASKED THAT BHUTTO SEE THAT HE WAS INFORMED OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF PAKISTAN, AS FAR AS MILITARY SUPPLY WAS CONCERNED, THE PRICE AND AVAILABILITY DATA BEING FURNISHED BY THE US, THE TERMS OF PAYMENT WE REQUESTED, ETC. SHAHI SAID THE NATURE OF THE DISCUSSION WAS SUCH THAT BHUTTO SEEMED TO FEEL HE HAD SOMETHING OF

A GREEN LIGHT TO GO AHEAD IN THE PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT FROM THE US, PROVIDED THE PRICE AND LEAD TIMES WERE NOT EXCESSIVE.

6. SHAHI SAID THERE WAS ALSO TALK ABOUT DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS LOANS. HE SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN AGREED THAT THIS SUBJECT WOULD BE PURSUED BY EXPERTS, BUT BHUTTO WAS LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THE SHAH WAS FAVORABLY DISPOSED. HE SAID THAT IN THIS DISCUSSION THE SHAH HAD MADE THE REMARK THAT THE RECENT 10 PERCENT RISE IN OIL PRICES BY OPEC WAS "TRIVIAL," BUT HE HOPED THE GESTURE OF NOT GOING HIGHER WOULD HELP CREATE A BETTER CLIMATE FOR THE COMING PARIS CONFERENCE.

7. I WOULD GUESS THAT BHUTTO WAS GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH HIS TALKS WITH THE SHAH, AS HE WAS WITH HIS RECENT TALKS IN SAUDI ARABIA. NEITHER APPARENTLY PRODUCED SPECIFIC AMOUNTS OF ASSISTANCE THAT MIGHT BE OBTAINED FOR THE PURCHASE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT. THAT WAS PROBABLY MORE THAN COULD BE EXPECTED AT THIS STAGE, AS THE PAKS HAVE NOT AS YET REFINED THEIR TOTAL REQUIREMENTS DOWN TO SUCH SPECIFIC TERMS. THERE WILL OBVIOUSLY BE A CONTINUING COORDINATION PROBLEM AS BOTH COUNTRIES MOVE TOWARDS SPECIFICS.

8. I ASKED SHAHI TO CONVEY MY APPRECIATION TO BHUTTO FOR THIS PROMPT AND DETAILED RUNDOWN OF HIS TALKS WITH THE SHAH.
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